and Annual plan estimates in respect of National Highways passing through the State for its approval sanction of the amount; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and Governments' decision thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) During 1998-99, 27 numbers Revised Estmates were received from the Government of Kerala. Out of these, 20 numbers Revised Estimates amounting to Rs. 30.83 Crore have been sanctioned.

Out of 37 works, included in Annual Plan 1998-99, 34 numbers of estimates totalling to Rs. 25 Crore have been received from the Government of Kerala and 24 numbers of estimates amounting to Rs. 16.5 Crore have been sanctioned.

Transparency in awarding road contracts by NHAI

2312. SHRI C. RAMA-CHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to news-item in the Economic Times dated the 12th February, 1999 captioned "IGM-GAYATRI to four lane Vijayawada-Guntur Road".

(b) whether IGM-GAYATRI is a public limited company;

(c) the details of experience and ownership of these concerns;

(d) whether it is incumbent on all awardees of such contracts to declare their ownership, etc.;

(e) what are the norms of transparency being introduced in all NHAI contracts; and

(f) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. IGM-Gayatri is a joint venture of IGM Corporation Berhad, Malaysia and M/s. Gayatri Project Ltd, Hyderabad.

(c) M/s. IGM Corporation Berhad is a public limited company engaged in the business of civil enginnering conduction. M/s. Gayatri Projects Ltd., is a private limited company incorporated under the Company's Act 1956 and is engaged in civil engiencering construction.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) and (f) Wide publicity through National and International dailies/ journals for application for prequalification of contractors, evaluation of the application by a Committee and concurrence therein of lending/funding agencies, -opening of financial bids in the presence of bidders, post qualification of bidders before award, evaluation of bids by a Committee and concurrence therein of the lending/funding agencies, etc. are among the important transparency norms being followed by National Highway Authority of India.

World Bank Assistance for construction of National Highways in Assam

2313. SHRI PRAKANTA WARISA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank have given the financial aids to some projects of construction of roads in various parts of the country particularly in Assam; and

(b) if so, the names thereof and what amount will be spent thereon and by when these are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Constitutionally, Central Government is

primarily responsible for development and maintenance of roads declared as national Highways. World Bank is giving assistance of US$ 306 million for improvement of National Highways in the States of Haryana, Punjab, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and West Bengal. No improvement work in Assam has been undertaken with World Bank assistance. The works are expected to be completed by June, 2001.

Amount spent on National Highways in Gujarat

2314. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

{a) the total number of National Highways in Gujarat; and

(b) the amount spent on them during last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) There are nine number of National Highways and one National Expressway which is under construction in the Gujarat State.

(b) The details are as under:

Year	Expenditure incurred on	
	Development of NHs	Maintenance of NHs. (Rs. in crores)
1995-%	54.58	17.45
1996-	37.38	27.13
97	43.22	37.57
1997-		

Missing of Sailing Vessel "Rajhans"

2315. SHRI AKHILESH DAS:
SHRI RAJUBHAI PARMAR:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the mechanised sailing vessel "Rajhans" reported missing alongwith 18 Indian crew members has since been traced; and

(b) if so, when and in what condition?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) The ill fated vessel m.v. Rajhans was found floating upside down near Kuria Muria island about 1050 miles from Indian Coast line. All the crew members were missing and only three bodies were found near the wreck on 22.12.98. The exact reasons for the casualty are not known due to the absence of survivors.

A fact finding inquiry has been initiated by the Directorate General of Shipping.

Conversion of Panchapalli-Manijanga as National Highway

2316. MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to convert the PANCHAPALLI-MANIJANGA ROAD in Jagatsinghpur district of Orissa into a National Highway;

(b) if not, the details of the amount spent on repairing the PANCHAPALLI-IBRISINGH portion of the road in the last three years;

(c) whether bills are passed every year for its repair but the same is pocketed by the concerned officials and their pet con tractors to the agony of the nearby villa gers; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?